

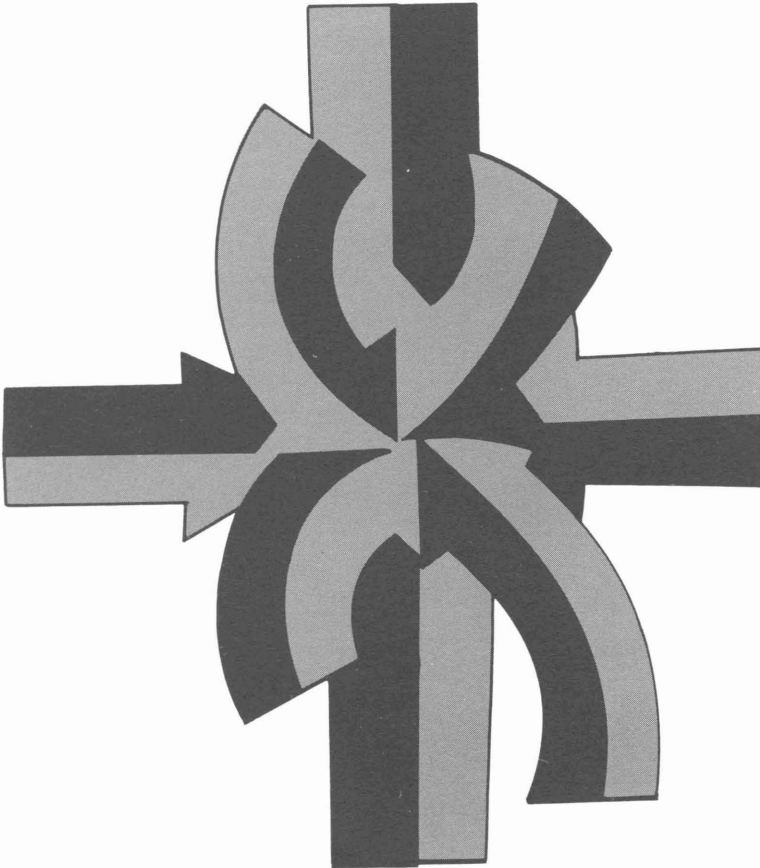
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On Being An Officer

Congratulations on being elected to serve your organization. This honor carries duties and responsibilities with it. Knowledge of these obligations will help you serve more efficiently to make your organization more effective. You must:

- Learn the purposes of the organization you serve.
- Learn your duties and how to carry them out.
- Do your part to inform the membership.



On Being An Officer

June Cline*

If You Are President...

You are the chief executive officer of your club.

You will set the tone and pace and in many ways determine the achievements of your club. Your success will depend upon your ability to inspire others to work with you.

As president, be familiar with the fundamentals of parliamentary procedure, with the bylaws or standing rules and with the purposes of your organization. Be genial, tactful and, above all, impartial in decision making.

You may be an exofficio member of all committees, except the nominating committee. As an exofficio member, you have all the rights of membership, including voting, but are not required to attend and are not counted in the quorum.

Bring your briefcase, containing the following items, to every meeting:

- Complete agenda.
- Copy of the handbook or manual of procedure.
- Copy of the bylaws or standing rules.
- List of officers and committee members.
- List of members.
- Copy of the parliamentary authority.

Duties of the office include:

- Helping the organization to grow and accomplish its objectives.
- Planning meetings.
- Conducting meetings.
- Conducting elections.
- Appointing committees.
- Enforcing the rules.
- Exercising tact and impartiality.
- Performing other duties as specified in the bylaws or standing rules.

*Extension organization specialist, The Texas A&M University System

Planning Meetings

To have more effective meetings, write a plan for each meeting using the organization's order of business as a guide. Obtain information from the secretary, committee chairmen and others as to what should be included.

Let those who are going to participate know what is expected of them. See that facilities are available and that someone familiar with their operation will be responsible. Plan for action that will be necessary after the meeting.

Conducting Meetings

Conducting a successful meeting depends on the presiding officer's ability, not merely to maintain order, but to guide the meeting. Procedures to follow depend upon the type of meeting, but effective leadership methods apply for all meetings.

As presiding officer, help the members feel at ease; encourage them to take part in discussion and interest them in the topic.

Be yourself. If you are natural and at ease, your group will sense it. Your preparations before the meeting will help you to be poised and confident.

Open the meeting on time. If there is a business session, conduct it according to accepted rules of parliamentary procedure. Give members a chance to talk but, at the same time, move the meeting along to completion.

If You Are Vice-President . . .

You are the president's assistant and must be thoroughly familiar with the president's duties.

You have the responsibilities of being chairman of the program committee.

Duties of the office include:

- Presiding in the absence of the president.
- Succeeding the president in the event of resignation or permanent incapacity.
- Performing other duties as assigned.
- Planning program topics and getting volunteers to take the responsibility for educational programs.

If You Are Secretary. . .

You are the recording officer of your organization and the custodian of its records. You assist the president by taking notes and being ready at any time to explain what business is pending.

As secretary, you do not forfeit any rights of membership. You may introduce motions, discuss them and vote on all measures.

You need to attend all meetings. If unable to attend, send the record book to the president.

Duties of the office include:

- Keeping the records of the organization. These include the membership roll, minutes, bylaws or standing rules, list of committees and their membership and committee plans and reports.
- Keeping the roll up to date and recording attendance at each meeting.
- Taking and writing minutes of each meeting.
- Providing the president with a list of unfinished business after each meeting.
- Reading papers or correspondence to the group during meetings.
- Conducting correspondence as requested.
- Summarizing and compiling reports.
- Notifying members of meetings.
- Furnishing committees with documents required to perform their duties.
- Making the records available to members upon request.
- Calling the meeting to order and presiding until a chairman pro tem is elected when the president and vice president are absent.
- Performing other duties as specified in the bylaws or standing rules.
- Make club reports to county Extension office.

Keeping Good Minutes

Make notes during the meeting; write minutes from those notes. In the first paragraph include:

- The kind of meeting; *business* or *special*.
- The name of the organization.
- The date, place and hour of the meeting.
- The fact that the president and secretary or, in the absence of the regular officers their substitutes, were present.
- Whether the minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved or their reading was dispensed with.

In the body of the minutes include:

- Motions introduced and the name of their proposers.
- Action taken.
- Votes cast.
- Summary of reports.
- All points of order and appeals with action taken.
- Program topic, method of presentation, names of participants.
- Hour of adjournment.

The minutes are a record of what was done, not what was said. Omit discussion, personal opinion, adjectives and interpretations.

The secretary signs the minutes when they are written. The president or chairman signs them after they are approved.

Corrections to the minutes are made by marking through the word or words to be corrected and writing the correction above or in the margin.

If You Are Treasurer . . .

You are the custodian of the club's income and financial records. You work closely with other officers and all committees.

You may serve as an exofficio member of the finance committee or any other committee whose duties involve spending the organization's money.

Duties of the office include:

- Receiving, holding and disbursing all monies as specified in the bylaws, standing rules or approved in the budget.
- Reporting progress at each meeting and upon request.
- Making a full report at the annual meeting.
- Performing other duties as specified in the bylaws or standing rules.

The Progress Report, received for filing, is never accepted until audited. Such a report includes:

- The balance on hand at the beginning of the month.
- Income received along with the source.
- Expenditures.
- Balance on hand at the end of the month.

The treasurer keeps a day-to-day record of transactions. Here is a simple form for keeping your records.

DATE		INCOME	OUTGO	BALANCE
Jan. 5	Balance			24.65
Jan. 6	John Smith, sale of nuts	3.60		28.25
Jan. 11	Eagle Printshop, yearbooks		20.00	8.25

If You Are Parliamentary . . .

You should be appointed by the president or chairman. Even though you are a member of the organization, remain impartial by not participating in the business.

The duties of the office include:

- Serving as parliamentary advisor to the president or chairman.
- Being available to any committee needing advice on procedure.
- Having a copy of the parliamentary authority at all meetings.

Acknowledgment

The original manuscript for this publication was authored by Bonnie Cox, former Extension organization specialist, the Texas A&M University System.

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